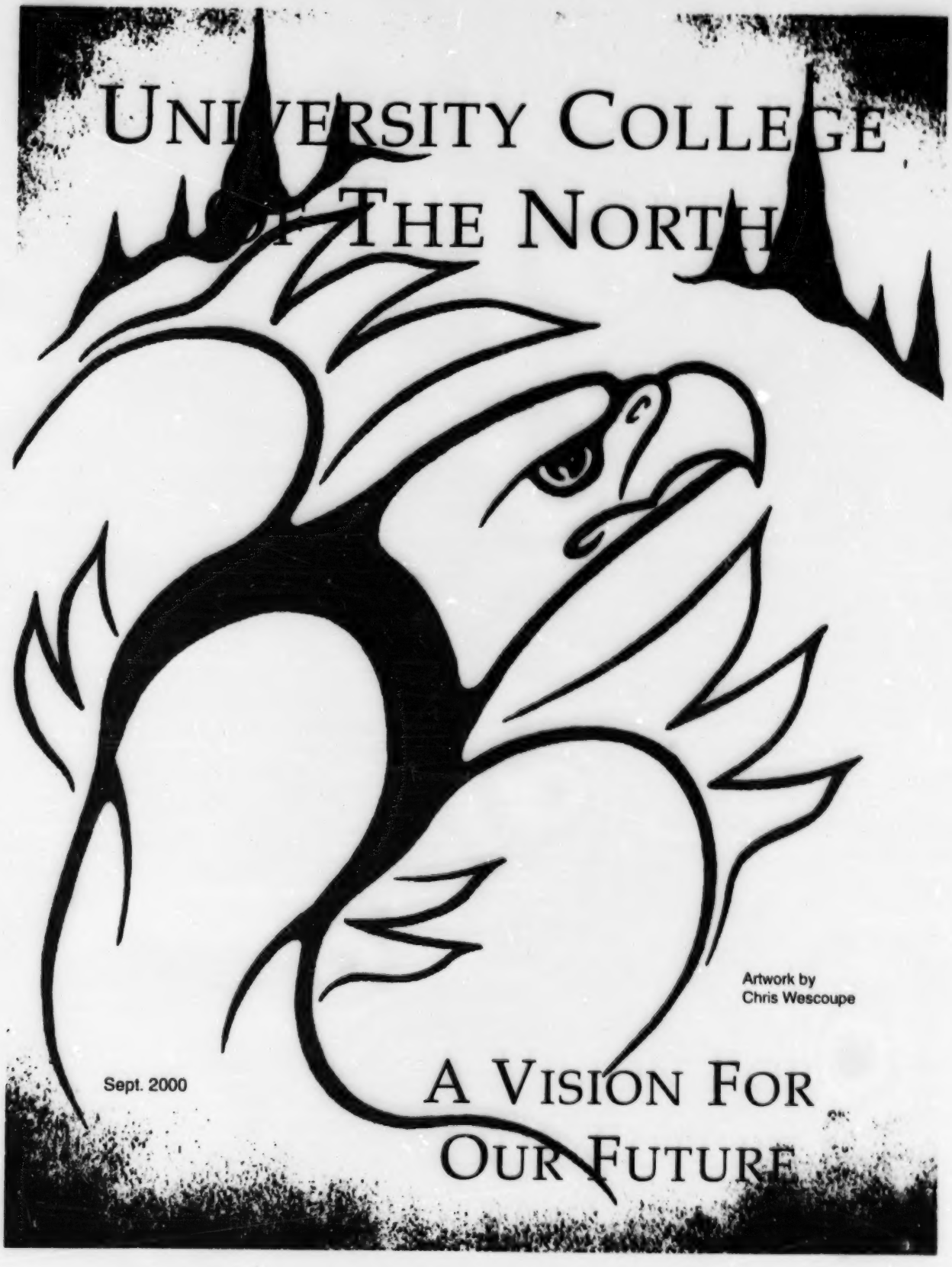
University College of the North



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A Vision For Our Future

A Proposal To Establish A
University College Of The North

A Vision For Our Future

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A Vision For Our Future

...recommending the creation of a University College of the North as a joint venture between the federal and provincial governments, northern communities, and Manitoba's post-secondary education institutions...

Introduction: Why a University College of the North?

The participation of northern Manitobans in post-secondary education continues to grow. More than 4,000 northern Manitobans register annually in post-secondary education.[1] The availability of post-secondary education and training is a high priority for northern communities. It is well recognized in northern Manitoba that participation in post-secondary education and training goes hand in glove with sustained economic prosperity and social success.

With the creation of Keewatin Community College in 1966, the customary array of college diploma and certificate programs became available to the North region. The College has made significant strides in providing educational programs and services in community-based settings. Also, over the years, a number of university-level programs have been introduced in the North with considerable success. These included Inter Universities North (IUN), the Brandon University Teacher Education Program (BUNTEP), the University of Manitoba's Bachelor of Social Work and Bachelor of Nursing programs, and most recently, Campus Manitoba.

The fact remains, however, that northern Manitobans seeking to participate in university studies in their home region, do not have access to a provincial institution that is designed

1. IUN 1,236; KCC 3,081; BUNTEP 124; CMB 80, BSW 125

specifically to reflect the North's unique geographical situation, and provides creditable university-level studies through a curriculum that incorporates a unique northern focus.

Despite the strong efforts of Manitoba's universities to make university education accessible to northerners, the participation and success rates of northerners enrolled in university studies in the North remains inadequate. A persistent combination of limited program choices, piecemeal coordination of programs and courses, and the learners' lack of institutional connection plagues university studies in the North.

The Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (M.K.O.) recognizes that institutional completeness is fundamental to creating a viable and self-sustaining northern community. In fact, the M.K.O. has concluded that without a university institution in the North, the economic and cultural aspirations of northern and Aboriginal communities cannot be realized.

Voicing this concern in writing to the government of Manitoba, the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (M.K.O) strongly urges the creation of a University College of the North, as a joint venture between the federal and provincial governments, northern communities, and Manitoba's post-secondary educational institutions (Appendix A).

The Focus of the Proposal

This proposal builds the case for the establishment of a university college in northern Manitoba that will offer a range of accredited post-secondary degree, certificate and diploma programs relevant to the needs of Aboriginal and non-aboriginal northern residents. The proposal:

- Analyzes historical and statistical information related to the creation of a university college in northern Manitoba.
- Articulates the case for the creation of a university college in northern Manitoba, based on this historical data and on new information obtained.
- Identifies an institutional structure to support a new vision for the delivery of post-secondary education in northern Manitoba.
- Makes a recommendation to establish the University College of the North (UCN).

The Case for a University College of the North (UCN)

A Stronger Northern Community

Providing a Northern Voice

First Nations, Metis, and non-Aboriginal residents of the North call for greater voice in shaping their economic, social and cultural future. UCN will provide a forum to align the talent, skill and knowledge of northern Manitoba.

Respecting the Aspirations of Aboriginal People

Education is one of the prime social forces for sustaining the culture of a people. For this reason, population groups advocate for the control of their own education. UCN will be a vehicle for the cultural aspirations of the Aboriginal people of northern Manitoba.

Maintaining a Northern Focus

Within a context of traditional career preparation programs, UCN will foster a culturally respectful environment where Aboriginal and northern values and knowledge are integrated into the institutional fabric. UCN will also devote significant academic resources to the study and research of northern issues.

Building a Northern Academic Community

A regional community that does not have control over its own education cannot become self-sustaining. Providing university-level education in the North, controlled and administered by northern residents, will provide the tools for community sustainability. UCN will bring together the critical mass of teachers, scholars, thinkers and entrepreneurs required to provide focus and commitment to the economic and cultural aspirations of the North.

Taking A Coordinated Approach

UCN will knit together a collection of disparate university program offerings and faculty expertise and will align these with the staff and programs available through Keewatin Community College. The university programs which are currently offered in the North are listed below:

- Brandon University Northern Teacher Education Program (BUNTEP)
- Inter-Universities North (IUN)
- Northern Bachelor of Nursing (The Pas, Thompson and Norway House)
- Faculty of Social Work (Thompson, Norway House, War Lake)
- Campus Manitoba

UCN is intended to operate as a distributed learning institution, serving the university and college learning needs of all northern Manitobans, with coordination from the Thompson and The Pas campuses.

Understanding the Geographic Conditions of the North

Northern Manitoba consists of a landmass of 204,000 square miles, sparsely populated by its 69,000 inhabitants. This context requires an institution that has a strong philosophical core and administrative centre, enabling the operation of innovative, community-based learning centres and the practice of leadership in the development of distance delivery learning systems.

Success through Education
Providing Greater Access to Northerners

UCN will create access to a university experience in northern Manitoba that is fully accredited with other universities. This is expected to increase the overall participation rate of northern secondary school graduates in university education, and to decrease the number of students moving out of the region to commence their university studies.

Overcoming the Negative Impacts of Relocation

Students, especially those from small northern communities, often experience the relocation to a larger urban centre with a sense of personal trauma that interferes with the achievement of success at university. The opportunity to function in a more familiar context and to maintain one's social networks while starting one's university experience will strengthen the potential for success. Those students who transfer out of the North region at a later point to complete their education elsewhere will be better prepared to succeed in the achievement of their goals.

Increasing Student Success

UCN will focus on typical northern social issues such as the challenge of relocation, the experience of racism and fostering knowledge of Aboriginal culture and traditional ways. Improved student success rates will provide significant short-term financial benefit and even greater long-term social benefit.

Fostering Adult Education

A significant number of adults in the North are unprepared academically to enter directly into post-secondary studies. The increasing recognition that post-secondary education builds careers in today's economy is causing growing numbers of adult learners to seek admission to university or college studies. Often, adult learners must accommodate family and employment responsibilities, along with their educational requirements. Admissions policies, student support services, and curriculum at UCN will focus particularly on enabling adult learners to successfully enter college or university programs.

Economic Spin-offs

Strengthening the Future Prospects for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Northerners

Over fifty percent of the 69,000 people living in northern Manitoba are of Aboriginal descent. In 2010, the overall population of northern Manitoba is projected to be about 76,000 persons (appendix E). It is widely acknowledged that the birth rate in the Aboriginal community is higher than it is in the rest of Canadian society. It is assumed, therefore, that the demand for post-secondary education in northern Manitoba, and from Aboriginal people in particular, will increase. Public investment in the expansion of post-secondary education in northern Manitoba will provide Northerners with much-needed opportunities to prepare for their participation in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st Century.

Sharing the Economic Benefits of UCN

It is estimated that as many as 400 northern Manitoba students move away from the North each year to study at a university. At an average per student annual cost of $15,000 per year, this amounts to an approximate total expenditure in excess of $6 million. Retaining a significant number of these students in the North will provide an economic benefit to the region.

UCN is expected to create employment for at least twenty-five additional faculty and staff members, adding in excess of $2 million in payroll and operating expenses to the current post-secondary education budget of northern Manitoba.

It is recognized that a well-educated work force generates new wealth in a community. UCN graduates will bring economic benefit to the regional community of the North.

A Description of the University College of the North (UCN)

Institutional Goals and Principles

The proposed goals and principles of the University College of the North are derived from discussions with the UCN Steering Committee and from community consultations. The goal is to establish a new institution in northern Manitoba that will provide an inclusive range of creditable, accessible and attainable post-secondary education opportunities to Aboriginal and northern residents. This institution is committed to the following principles:

- Education will be learner-centred and designed to support growth throughout life's journey.
- The learning environment will be holistic and be characterized through a culture of openness, inclusiveness, tolerance and respect.
- Program curricula will integrate a balance of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal teachings.
- Education will advance the restoration and preservation of culture, language and social heritage of Aboriginal people.
- Education will be accredited to enable transferability between programs and institutions.
- Program delivery will be regional and community-based, and the institution will use innovative curriculum designs, delivery methods and inter-active learning technologies to achieve these goals.
- The governing bodies of the institution will reflect the cultural diversity of northern Manitoba.
- The institution will assist with community development needs.
- Faculty and staff will reflect the cultural composition of the student population.

- The institution will provide to faculty and staff, culturally relevant pre- and in-service training on working with Aboriginal people.

- Student support services will facilitate the achievement of individual learning goals in a safe, secure and supportive environment.

- Fostering education partnerships with existing, accredited post-secondary institutions will be an institutional priority.

- The institution will develop and maintain a resource centre enabling First Nations and Aboriginal communities to share their knowledge, experience and resources related to holistic and life long education.

- The institutional research focus will relate to northern economic, environmental, cultural and other northern issues.

- The institution will seek to establish provincial, national and international linkages for purposes of research, teaching and learning.

Institutional Relationships

UCN will exist as an independent, board governed, publicly funded post-secondary institution in Manitoba. As a new institution within the network of provincial post-secondary institutions, UCN will progress over time towards the full practice of its mandate of independently providing approved and accredited certificate, diploma and degree programs. UCN will seek partnerships with Manitoba's other universities in the design and provision of UCN degree programs. The introduction of joint degree programs, the use of joint delivery through distance education technology and other innovations, and requests for the cross appointment of selected university faculty members to UCN programs will be among the issues to be explored with Manitoba universities.

The Role of Keewatin Community College Within UCN

Although with the establishment of UCN, Keewatin Community College will cease to exist as an independent board governed post-secondary institution, it will be the organizational base upon which the new institution will be built. The contribution of the College will be

critical to the success of UCN. The College's expertise in institutional management and administration, access programming, adult education, community-based program delivery, the development and delivery of career, trades, technology and apprenticeship programs will strengthen the image, contribution and reputation of UCN.

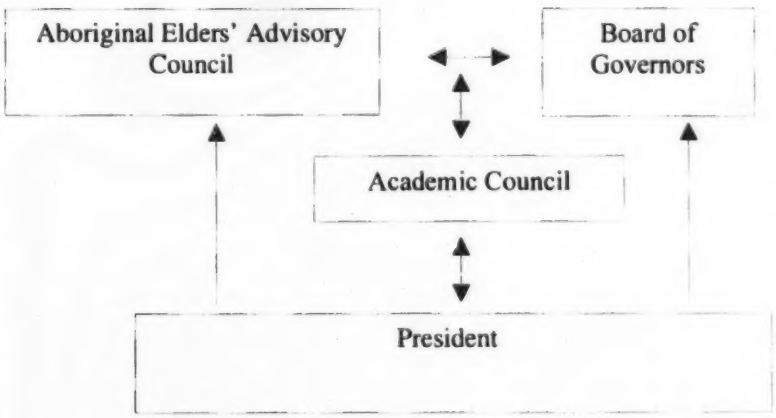
Leadership at UCN

Institutional governance has an external and an internal dimension: the regulatory and statutory limitations determined by government (external), and the institutional policy framework enabling effective governance (internal).

The external governance structure of UCN will be consistent with the governance structures for other publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Manitoba.

The internal governance structure of UCN will reflect the cultural diversity of northern Manitoba. Currently 57 per cent of the population of northern Manitoba is Aboriginal. Census data indicate that this trend will continue to rise for the next several years.

In order to reflect the cultural reality of northern Manitoba, the new institution's internal governance structure will feature a demographically representative Board of Governors, an Aboriginal Elders'Advisory Council, an Academic Council, a President and a management structure, as determined by the needs and priorities of the institution.
Below is diagrammatic presentation of the proposed internal governance structure of UCN.



The Aboriginal Elders'Advisory Council will comprise from eight to ten members, either elected or appointed by the three Tribal Councils (Swampy Cree Tribal Council, Island Lake Tribal Council and Keewatin Tribal Council) and the Manitoba Metis Federation.

The primary responsibility of this council will be to act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Governors as well as advance the restoration and preservation of culture, language and social heritage of Aboriginal people within the institution.

The Board of Governors will comprise a minimum of 15 members, who will be either elected or appointed. The membership of the Board of Governors will include: the President of UCN (Ex Officio); 1 Elder from the Aboriginal Elders'Advisory Council; 2 students; 2 staff members (1 instructor and 1 support staff); 3 Tribal Council members; 1 MMF member; 1 NACC member; 1 MKO member; 1 Urban Industrial Committee member; and at least two other members. The Chair will be elected from within the membership.

The membership structure of the Board of Governors will ensure gender balance and equitable representation from the perspectives of geography, race, culture, and regional economic priority. The primary responsibility of the Board of Governors will be the governance of the institution through creating an institutional vision, determining institutional policies, and ensuring their implementation.

The Academic Council will comprise a minimum of eight members, who will be either elected or appointed from within the academic institution. The President of the institution will chair the Academic Council. The Academic Council will have jurisdiction over new program recommendations, institutional research priorities, admissions policies, academic standards, student appeals, program evaluations, and curriculum content, particularly respecting the institutional curriculum focus on northern and Aboriginal perspectives.

Academic Profile

The Academic Division budget will allocate significant resources to enable the design of programs for direct delivery in community settings or via distance education modalities. The Academic Division will offer only duly approved and accredited certificate, diploma and degree programs to ensure the competence of UCN graduates, and the transferability of UCN academic credentials to other colleges and universities within the province of Manitoba and

beyond. The inclusion of Aboriginal and northern perspectives in UCN curricula will be a distinguishing feature in the institution's academic profile. The establishment of an Aboriginal Cultural Institute is also envisioned within UCN.

UCN will maintain a Continuing Education Division to offer credit and non-credit education opportunities on a contract or cost recovery basis. The development of a Northern Leadership Institute to groom the North's future leaders through mentoring and formal courses will be a priority.

The development of programs and the support for scholarly research related to northern issues will also be a priority. A system of program advisory committees will be maintained to ensure that linkages between UCN programs and the economic and cultural aspirations of northern Manitoba remain intact.
Outlined below is a potential slate of academic programs to be delivered by UCN.

University College of the North			
University Programs	**College Programs**	**Adult Education**	**Aboriginal Studies**
Bachelor of Social Work*	Certificates & Diplomas	Continuing Education	BA in Aboriginal Studies
Bachelor of Nursing*	Trades, Technical, Career	Transition Year	Work with other divisions
Bachelor of Education*		ESL	
Bachelor of General Studies		Literacy	
Bachelor of Science			
Bachelor of Arts			
Bachelor of Bus. Adm.			

*These programs are currently operated by the University of Manitoba or Brandon University and may become joint degree programs.

Faculty and Instructional Staff

In building its complement of faculty and staff, UCN will, where possible, incorporate personnel attached to the post-secondary programs, services and activities currently offered in the North. Cross appointments of faculty members from other Manitoba universities will also be explored as a means of obtaining scholarly expertise required by programs.

Efforts will be made to attract and retain a complement of faculty and staff that is representative of the northern demographics. In order to reflect the traditional wisdom of the north, UCN will also be receptive to the inclusion of faculty colleagues who will enrich the learning and cultural environment of the institution by virtue of their life experiences and traditional knowledge.

UCN Facilities

UCN will deliver programs at regional centres, other community-based facilities, and its regional campus sites in Thompson and The Pas, using distance delivery technologies and on-site instruction. In addition to instructional delivery, the two regional campus sites will house UCN's administrative services, learning supports such as the libraries and curriculum centre, academic administration, faculty offices, and the information technology and distance education technology departments. UCN's community-based learning facilities will be established through partnership arrangements with First Nations education authorities, school divisions, and other community partners. The community-based learning facilities will provide a combination of on-site instruction and virtual classroom technology, allowing flexibility and innovation in learning and teaching.

New Facilities in Thompson

The Thompson Campus of Keewatin Community College consists of a cluster of converted residence buildings, originally constructed for INCO miners. The buildings were not designed to house an educational facility, and this has added additional challenge to the delivery of high quality post-secondary education in Thompson. University programs currently taught in Thompson are housed either at the KCC Campus, or in other rental facilities. KCC's Thompson Campus facilities are inadequate to house the college and university courses currently offered in Thompson. In addition, UCN is expected to attract at least 150 additional students and related faculty members to the Thompson Campus site. With the creation of the new UCN institution, and co-locating all university and college

programs located in Thompson under one roof, the construction of a new campus in Thompson becomes a necessity. The availability of a new facility in Thompson that celebrates, in its architectural design, the cultural history and the environmental aesthetics of northern Manitoba will express the sense of vision and hope that will underlie the creation of the University College of the North.

Construction Cost Estimate for New Facility in Thompson

584 FTE students[2] $19,300,000.[3]

Institutional Enrolment and Cost Projections

Enrolment Estimate

The full time equivalent (FTE) student enrolment at Keewatin Community College is 1,000 students annually. The estimated FTE student enrolment in stand alone university programs currently offered in the North is 424, exclusive of Campus Manitoba (Appendix F)

It is anticipated that new full time degree program offerings at UCN will generate 150 additional FTE students. (This projection assumes a continued out-migration of some secondary school graduates, an overall increase in the university study participation rate as a result of increased institutional access and visibility, and a modest increase in adult learner enrolments.)

The projected total annual FTE student enrolment at UCN is 1,574 students. (This projection excludes Campus Manitoba enrolments and anticipated enrolments in courses and programs that operate on a cost recovery basis.)

FTE Enrolment Estimate

Keewatin Community College	1,000 students
Current University Programs	424 students
New Programs	150 students
Total FTE Enrolment Projection	**1,574 students**

2. Projected annual FTE enrolment at Thompson Campus: 584 students (KCC 250; BUNTEP 124; BSW 85; IUN 50; New Degree 75)

3. The following parameters for the cost projection of constructing a new campus were obtained from a Winnipeg architectural firm: 584 FT students x 160 sq. ft. per student x $180 per sq. ft. plus 15% for site work, architectural and engineering services plus applicable taxes.

Existing Annual Provincial Core Funding	
Current university programs offered in the North	$3,170,000.
Keewatin Community College	$11,000,000.
Total	$14,170,000. (Appendix J)
Incremental Annual Provincial Core Funding Required	
150 FTE students @ $10,950.[3]	$1,642,500.
Start up Cost Estimate	
Expansion of the Electronic Infrastructure	$1,000,000.
Miscellaneous operating expenses related to start up	$1,000,000.
Total Start Up Cost Estimate	$2,000,000.

Legislative Requirements to Establish UCN

The existence and operating scope of publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Manitoba are defined in law. New legislation will be required to create the University College of the North. Once the external and internal governance structures for the new institution have been defined in law, these may be implemented.

The definition of the UCN institutional mandate and its operating structure falls within the scope of internal governance. The establishment of effective institutional relationships with other provincially funded post-secondary institutions and the creation of the administrative and academic structures of UCN will be the first priorities of the new institution.

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3. Source: Council on Post-Secondary Education

Recommendation

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak recommends that the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada endorse this proposal and begin a process of implementing the concept.